Tells the Facts and Names the Names

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"When the news came of her death, my first thoughts were of place and time—of the wrongness of any royal princess, even a divorced one, contriving to be in that place at that time...Paris in August?"

— Tina Brown, *The New Yorker*

The Missing Suitcase Bombs:

A Hundred Nukes on the Loose

As the regime now in power in Moscow devotes itself to pillaging the ruined country's assets, leaving the population little to look forward to but increasingly early death, it finds no supporter more staunch than the Clinton administration. Whatever the nature of the crime under review, whether it be Boris Yeltsin's reported personal skimming of IMF loans, the disposal of billions of dollars worth of natural resources to associates of "reformers" in the Kremlin or neglect of Russia's potent nuclear arsenal, nothing disturbs the equanimity of the present US government.

The recent disclosure by General Alexander Lebed, formerly Secretary of Yeltsin's National Security Council, that he had found no less than 100 one kiloton nuclear weapons missing from the Russian stockpile provides a case in point.

Lebed first revealed this chilling tale in a private meeting with a visiting group of Congressfolk back in May this year. During his four-month tenure of the national security post in 1996, most of which was devoted to settling the Chechen war, he had ordered a check on the inventory of "suitcase bombs". These are bombs, technically known as Special Atomic Demolition Munitions, designed for sabotage by special forces behind enemy lines in the event of a nuclear war, and handily packaged in suitcases for convenient transportation. Despite an intensive search by Lebed's men, one hundred could not be found. The general did not reveal this news to make headlines. The meeting was behind closed doors and there was no press briefing. He seemed solely interested in alerting the US government to the fact that these weapons are on the loose, somewhere.

Curt Weldon (R-Pa) the leader of the delegation, duly briefed the White House, CIA, DIA and Department of Energy immediately on his return from Moscow. There was no reaction.

Andrew and Leslie Cockburn, however, discovered what Lebed had said and reported it in their recently published book *One Point Safe*, which deals with the state of the Russian stockpile. CBS *60 Minutes*, alerted to the scoop, sent Leslie Cockburn to Moscow to produce a piece on the missing suitcases. In an interview, which he gave only reluctantly, Lebed confirmed the story.

Given that Yeltsin and his cronies don't even seem to care that the launch controls on strategic nuclear ICBMs are so deteriorated that they are prone to slip into "combat mode" unbidden, it is not surprising that they ignored Lebed's warning. Yeltsin, after all, fears the military as a possible threat to his power and therefore seeks only to starve it to death while he builds up his own private army, the MVD forces of the Ministry of Interior. The Clinton administration however has repeatedly invoked the menace of terrorism in the course of its effort to shred constitutional liberties. It is hard to conceive of a more perfect terrorist weapon than a nuclear bomb that comes readily disguised as a suitcase.

Nevertheless, when asked whether there had been any attempt to follow up on Lebed's report, the National Security Council's senior director for Non Proliferation, Gary Samore, stated that the Russian Government had denied the story, which seemed good enough for him. Samore even appeared ignorant that such weapons exist, despite the fact that the Russian SADM has been com-

(continued on p. 6)

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Our Little Secret

The CIA: Lest We Forget

The respectful articles in the public prints to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the CIA are predictably selective in their citation of Agency "successes", hewing closely to such well churned examples as the coups in Iran and Guatemala.

It therefore falls to **CounterPunch** to make note of other coups considered by the Langley spooks as even greater triumphs but which have not received the public attention they deserve.

For sheer numbers of victims, the palm must go to the installation of the present Indonesian regime in 1965, in the course of which a million Indonesian Communists were killed. On that occasion the Jakarta CIA station, under the direction of station chief Hugh Tovar, reportedly provided guidance and assistance to the murderers, including helpful lists of suitable victims for the execution squads. (Twenty years later Tovar, with the discretion native to an old spook, was still talking about the "alleged massacre" in Indonesia.)

At least the general public was aware at the time of the holocaust of the Indonesian Communists, even though no one cared very much. The slaughter of Iraqi intellectuals attendant on the 1963 Baathist coup in Iraq–and the CIA's role in it–has received almost no attention.

James Critchfield, head of the Middle East Division of the CIA's Operations Directorate at the time, once described this affair as "a great victory. We really had the Ts crossed on what was happening." This is hardly surprising, since, as one member of the newly installed government that replaced the popular leftist leader General Abdel Karim Kassem (tied to a chair and shot) later observed, "We came to power on a CIA train".

The Agency's role is chillingly detailed in *A Brutal Friendship: The West and the Arab Elite*, a book recently published in Britain by Said K. Aburish, a London-based writer on Lebanese affairs. Aburish says that he believes 5,000 were killed of whom he has collected the names of 600, including many doctors, lawyers, teachers and professors who formed the educated elite of Iraq. The death lists were a collective effort by CIA stations across the Middle East, drawn up with the help of Iraqi exiles. Saddam Hussein, in Cairo prior to the coup, provided enthusiastic and valuable help in this morbid exercise. However, according to Aburish, "The American agent who produced the longest list was William McHale (now dead), who operated under the cover of a news correspondent for the Beirut bureau of *Time*."

On reaching Baghdad, the lists took vicious and bloody effect. Pregnant women and old men were killed, some tortured to death in front of their children. Aburish notes that among those who shared in the fruits of the "great victory" was Saddam Hussein, who rushed back from exile in Egypt and eagerly set to work in the torture chambers.

King Hussein of Jordan once reminisced to the Egyptian writer Mohammed Heikal that during the planning of the coup "many meetings were held between the Baath party and American intelligence, the most critical ones in Kuwait." On the day of the coup, February 8, 1963, a clandestine radio message from Kuwait "relayed to those carrying out the coup the names and addresses of Communists there, so they could be seized and executed."

CIA help was essential to the Iraqi Baathists, who had only 850 members at the time. The "cleansing" of Communists and leftists was the Americans' price for their professional assistance.

As **CounterPunch** readers will recall, recent CIA attempts at a coup in Iraq have been rather less successful, though an Agency-sponsored car bombing campaign did manage to kill a couple of hundred civilians in Baghdad.

Diana: Now This

The biggest little secret in the last days of Princess Diana's life was that she was pregnant. She had confided as much to at least one intimate. Though her romance with Dodi Fayed had barely started, by our count, he could have been the one.

Pincus's Pirouette

Among the flummery adorning the CIA's fiftieth was a particularly oleaginous offering by that old prentice spook, Walter Pincus, who turned in a puff piece on the Langley spy nest for the *Washington Post*, published September 14. There was one big surprise for Pincus-watchers. It came in the thirteenth paragraph, where Pincus wrote that soon the CIA's Inspector General is to deliver a report, "guaranteeing more criticism for the agency's cooperation with drug dealers who were also aiding Nicaraguan contra operations."

What's this, Walter? Only a year ago you were savagely denouncing Gary Webb for his series in the *San Jose Mercury News* which described in precise detail exactly this conjunction of the CIA,

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contras and drug traffickers. Pincus assigns the Agency an even lowlier role, dealing only with the drug traffickers, while drug lords are given the more heroic manly task of providing aid and comfort to Ronald Reagan's freedom fighters.

At least Pincus earns points for brevity. Theodore Draper churned out an interminable piece on the history of spooks in a recent issue of the *New York Review of Books*. Draper's musing on the Agency travels thousands of words to reach the redoubtable conclusion that if the CIA has a future it will surely be as a crime fighting outfit, doing covert battle with drug dealers and international syndicates of a felonious profile. So this is how it ends for the Agency which formed such productive partnerships over the past half century with Nazi war criminals, Mafia chieftains, Laotian opium warlords and the Cali cartel. Bring on the Inspector Generals.

THE RISE AND RISE OF DARYL JONES

The administration's nominee as the next secretary of the Air Force is Daryl Jones, a black Florida state senator. This modest political rank obscures a talented fixer, potentially in the mold of the late, great Ron Brown. Indeed Jones has already done some business with Ron's son, Michael Brown, who recently pleaded guilty to illegal influence peddling.

Why would the Clinton administration pick Jones? The answer lies in a story we ran here in **CounterPunch** last spring, about the new airport to be built at Homestead. In the wake of Hurricane Andrew, which struck south Miami in August of 1992, the Air Force decided to close its base at Homestead, which used to house 100 planes. This decision prompted howls of protest from Cuban fanatics, who charged that Homestead was vital to the defense of South Florida from the menace of Castro's Cuba. The Cubans turned to two men to plead their cause, David Weaver, a businessman and Republican fundraiser, and Daryl Jones, who suggested an alternative. Make Homestead the nesting habitat of the 482 fighter wing of the Air Reserve, a 20 plane outfit, and turn the rest of the airfield over to Dade County. (Jones just happened to be a captain in the 482 fighter wing.)

Dade County officials were thirsting to build a huge new commercial airport on the base, supposedly to relieve pressure on Miami International Airport and increase overall landing capacity in southern Florida, thus striking a blow at the rival tourist magnet of Orlando. The Air Force quickly adopted the Jones plan. In remarkably short order, the development contract for this pharaonic enterprise, estimated at $12 billion, went to an unknown company, Homestead Airbase Development Inc. (HABDI), controlled by the powerful and malodorous Latin Builders Association.

Soon Carlos Herrera was closeted with Victoria's husband, Senator Ted Kennedy.

The head of both HABDI and the Latin Builders Association is Carlos Herrera, a Cuban exile who celebrated his love for his adopted country by a visit to the Clinton White House, at a cost of $100,000. Herrera's advisor in this investment was Marvin Rosen, a south Florida lawyer—later finance chair of the DNC—retained by HABDI to ease the politically arduous regulatory permit process. At Rosen's elbow was Michael Brown and Victoria Reggie. Soon Herrera was closeted with Victoria's husband, Senator Ted Kennedy, who had at that time the allure to Herrera of being on the Senate Armed Services Committee which among other duties oversees base closings.

The proposed airport's most resolute foe is a coalition of environmentalists, led by the local Sierra Club chapter. They see the $12 billion scheme as a disaster for the Everglades and the coral reefs in Biscayne Bay. A guerrilla war has been ongoing, with the Clinton administration nervously resisting demands for a full environmental review.

Now enters Daryl Jones once again. Homestead is in his state senate district and he is widely known to be HABDI's man in the legislature, tirelessly offering a flow of amendments and late-night legislative legerdemain designed to outflank the dread possibility that some kind of environmental review might precede the biggest construction project in the history of Dade County.

Among Jones's most recent coups on Herrera's behalf is a bill shoved through the Florida state legislature calling for the "expedited re-use" of former military bases, allowing this "re-use" to side step normal regulatory hoops. It appears the Clinton administration is also going to heed this call. Word is that Katie McGinty, the administration's eco-czarina, will give the nod for the project to proceed without an environmental impact statement before the beginning of October, a show of gratitude to Herrera and Jones for rounding up money and support for Clinton/Gore in 1996.

THE HUEY LONG AWARD

CounterPunch's Huey Long Award for Exuberant Rhetoric goes this month to another son of the Bayou State, Ernest Johnson, who is head of the state chapter of the NAACP. As noted in a recent issue, Johnson and his outfit have been stentorian supporters of Shintech's plan to build the second largest chemical plant in the world in Louisiana's cancer alley, mostly inhabited by very poor black people with astronomical rates of cancer.

Louisiana governor Mike Foster has put $2.5 million of Louisiana's money into Johnson's pet project. The grant to the Johnson-led Louisiana Community Development Capital Fund came on the same day that Johnson went public with his group's unyielding support of Shintech. Johnson earned his Huey Long Award by using the occasion to lash out at the hated greens: "I am sure you all remember Susan Smith who killed her two sons. In order to solve her problem she too turned to the black community, and said a black man hijacked her car and kidnapped the boys. Like Charles Stuart and Susan Smith [the greens] turned to the black community to solve their problem by playing the race card, and claiming Environmental Racism." ■

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How To Fake An Invoice (But Tell Your Lover, Too)

The story of US defense since the end of the Cold War has been one of increasing torrents of money pouring into the pockets of major defense contractors, with less and less in the form of actual weapons being delivered in return. Meanwhile the defense industry itself has become increasingly monopolistic, with Lockheed-Martin and Boeing between them absorbing almost all their major rivals.

The thought of Norm Augustine, boss of Lockheed, trousering all those billions is indeed galling, but a little noticed trend in defense fraud introduces a cheering note: the little guy can get his turn at the trough.

Take the case of James E. McGill, who collected $3,025,670.99 for non existent supplies and services to the Military Sealift Command. A retired Petty Officer, his years in the service had taught him how the system works — which is not at all. With the simple tools of a rented mailbox, rubber stamps and a few forged signatures he would be still in business, save for an unfortunate bit of bad luck that could have happened to anyone. A clerk in the act of writing a check to McGill happened to look out the window and notice that a ship for which McGill was claiming to have supplied numerous parts was moored in front of him—mothballed and definitively out of service.

James Lugas, a retired air force captain working as an accountant at Reese Air Force Base in Texas, set up a dummy company purporting to supply metal shelving and meat to the stock fund and commissary at the base. He got away with $2,094,318.50, much of which he spent on cars—at least 20. He was caught only because his girlfriend, cognizant of his healthy cash position but ignorant of the true source of his income, denounced him to the authorities as a drug dealer.

These two entrepreneurs were apprehended in the early days of the Clinton administration. They had to go to the trouble, admittedly minimal, of fabricating the necessary paperwork. Things have changed in the intervening years. Thanks to "streamlining government", one of Al Gore's more cherished initiatives, the task of requesting and receiving money from the Pentagon has been vastly simplified.

All that is basically necessary is to set up a bogus company, formulate an invoice in the correct form — a task simplified by the provision of relevant software on the internet, thanks to Gore's infatuation with cyberspace, and send in the bill. Traditionally, payment would be withheld until the bill could be matched up with a receiving order, indicating that goods had actually been delivered. But now the requirement for the receiving order is being dropped under a new policy dubbed by Pentagon wags "pay and chase"—pay first and then chase the guy who ripped off the government.

The message is clear. Clinton, Gore and the rest of the reinvented government are not just trying to make life easier for big trough feeders. With a little attention to detail, anyone can play. ■

The Incredible Flying Cocktail Shaker

As we go to press, pork dealers on Capitol Hill are locked in a titanic struggle over the future apportionment of $27 billion. That is the estimated lifetime cost of the nine B-2 bombers that Stealth partisans want the Congress to commit to in next year's spending bills with an initial tranche of $331 million.

This is a difficult moment for proponents of what is assuredly the greatest boondoggle of all time to be dipping their hands in the till. The normally spineless GAO recently sat up in bed and reported that the B-2 ($2 billion a copy) can't fly through a rainstorm without the fancy plastics that make up the stealth coating on the plane "degrading".

However, Norm Dicks, the Washington Democrat, and other partisans should not lose hope. **CounterPunch** can reveal that the B-2 has a secret attribute that makes it unique in the annals of aerial warfare: it can actually manufacture its own ordnance (bombs) in flight.

This capability, unanticipated by the designers and now classified far above Top Secret by the Air Force, came to light after a long range test flight over the Pacific last year. Post-flight checks revealed an enormous block of ice weighing 500 lbs had formed inside the aircraft during its journey.

The possibilities are awesome. Not only can the bomber re-arm itself without having to touch the ground, but the ice bombs it drops on the enemy will, at least in warm weather operations, inevitably melt into the ground once they have completed their destructive mission. A Stealth bomb!

Close examination of any modern aircraft will reveal the fuselage to be pitted with tiny holes, known in the trade as "weeper holes". These are necessary because planes inevitably absorb moisture as they go up and down in flight. The holes are to allow the water to drain out again and not accumulate inside the hull. The essence of a stealth aircraft skin however is that it be absolutely smooth, with no breaks in the surface — *i.e.*, no weeper holes. Thus water goes in, but has no way out. The plane ascends to high altitude. The water freezes.

There is, unfortunately, one obstacle to be overcome before the stealth bomb can be made fully operational: there is as yet no way of ensuring precisely where the ice will form. Thus, when the plane landed after the abovementioned Pacific flight, the ice had already begun to melt. The water was dripping directly into the hundreds of millions of dollars worth of avionics (electrical systems) stuffed into the plane, with predictable results.

Discussing the issue, a senior Pentagon official and Friend of **CounterPunch** supplies the only word applicable to the entire B-2 program: "Fiasco", a word grossly overused in relation to the Air Force's stealth program given the mid-air disintegration of a Lockheed-built F-117A at an east coast air show on Sept. 14. ■

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Gore Girl's Motown Taint

This summer, in early July, Karenna Gore, daughter of the Vice-president and Tipper, married Dr. Andrew Schiff. We've all been involved in Karenna's upbringing: It was for her sake that Al and Tipper asked the rest of us to sacrifice the First Amendment, just so she wouldn't find out that Prince had a dirty mind.

For such reasons our friend Dave Marsh, the mighty editor of *Rock 'n Roll Confidential*, tells us how he can't help regarding Karenna and her sister (the one arrested with a beer can in her hand on the lawn of her high school a couple of years back) and brother (who got run over by a car because his father didn't have a tight grip on his hand as they left a baseball stadium) with the feelings one reserves for a godchild. So it seemed altogether fitting that Dave has looked into Dr. Schiff and his family, just to make certain that Karenna has made a solid match.

Dr. Schiff's father, David T. Schiff, is managing partner of Kuhn, Loeb, a major Wall Street firm. More on him in our next issue. Dr. Schiff's mother, Lisa, once sat upon the board of directors of Georgetown University, sometimes known as CIA State. Good match, especially if you're an aspiring presidential candidate.

Dr. Shiff's mother, Lisa, is currently a managing director of Touchwood Records in New York. The other managing director of this company is Dr. Schiff's brother, Scott. According to the Touchwood website, when Scott worked at Atlantic Records "scouring retail pockets across the country to spot trends, Scott and his co-workers were among the first to recognize the potential of a small bar band and brought them to the attention of Atlantic. The band was Hootie and the Blowfish." According to Tim Sommer, the Atlantic executive who signed Hootie, "Scott told Danny Goldberg about this sales spike...Danny sent me to see the band. I signed them (literally) on the spot, and far more important methinks, midwifed the album and the band's developing relationship with the label." Sommer says Scott Schiff was "a pretty-no, very-nice kid until Doug Morris started using him to stake his own claim in signing/developing Hootie... [Scott] never met or saw the band prior to their signing, and I'm not entirely sure he had even heard them prior to forwarding the local sales info...Scott reads numbers, local sales numbers; it wasn't his job to listen to music or make any comment on music."

Out of this, the family started a record label-well, not entirely out of this, since Lisa Schiff is the daughter of T. Newman Lawler, a "musical copyright specialist whose clients ranged from Irving Berlin to Van Cliburn, and for many years invested in landmark musicals," according to the website. Such capital, though undoubtedly wrested from the creative efforts of others, is in fact precisely the kind of intellectual property that Al Gore made all those fundraising calls to protest. No harm to our Karenna seems likely from such a source. However...

Did Tipper realize she was practically related to "a porn queen in heat"?

Having perhaps greater capital than credentials, the Schiffs needed a "record man" to run the show and found one in Director of Distribution Irv Biegel. Biegel has an extensive background among those who Al and Tipper think should be ashamed for promoting music that corrupts youths. He was once vice president of sales and marketing at Motown and though Marsh says he's never believed the stories about Motown's sales operations having a Mafia taint, Al Gore and his wife have been known to credit stories far more peculiar. Later, Biegel became associated with Neil Bogart, a man who signed Joan Jett, Kiss, Donna Summer, Bob Segar *and* Question Mark and the Mysterians. Bogart helped invent both bubblegum pop and disco, and lost a fortune on a three-record set of highlights from the *Tonight Show*. Although the Gores apparently have no problem associating themselves with cocaine addict musicians—Marsh remembers Madison Square Garden in 1992 when they danced to Fleetwood Mac at the convention—it is undeniable that Bogart was no stranger to dope culture.

Donna Summer began her career by imitating an orgasm on "I Feel Love." She was a "porn queen in heat" long before Tipper's PMRC invented that epithet for Madonna. Joan Jett is both a genius rock 'n roller and someone who recorded the Rolling Stones' "Starfucker". KISS, of course, violates almost every one of Tipper's strictures: They are associated with violence, explicit sex (bassist Gene Simmons used to carry abound a catalog of Polaroid spread shots of his groupie conquests) and, of course, many of the sources Tipper cites in her book, *Raising PG Kids in an X-Rated Society*, insist that the band's very name is an occult acronym for Kids In Satan's Service.

Perhaps Al and Tipper will contact Joe Kennedy to find out about the possibility of annulling this ill-conceived pairing. ■

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(Suitcase Nukes, cont. from p. 1)
mon knowledge among American intelligence specialists for years and that Gorbachev even pledged publicly to destroy them all – one of the many promises the former darling of the western press failed to keep.

Had anyone from the White House tried to contact Lebed to ask him for more details? Samore admitted they had not, nor were there any plans to do so. As denunciations of Lebed spewed forth from Moscow, casting him as merely a politician promulgating "fantasy" in the cause of self promotion (as noted, Lebed had not wanted to discuss the issue in public at all) the White House did their own part to downplay the story, echoing the canard in Lebed's motives in going public. At all costs, nothing to embarrass Yeltsin.

Official complacency remained undisturbed even when Lebed's deputy at the security council, Vladimir Denisov, although less forthright than Lebed, told a reporter for the Russian news agency *Interfax* that the suitcase search had indeed taken place – he had been in charge. Though the bombs stored in Russia were accounted for, they had no idea where the weapons deployed outside Russia itself in the days of the Soviet Union, might have ended up.

Selectively concealing or ignoring bad news from Russia is nothing new for the Clintonites and ignorant windbags such as *Drudge* dredger Bill Arkin who was recruited by *The Nation*'s Russian "reform" groupie Katrina vanden Heuvel to attack Lebed and those reporting on the suitcase bomb.

In December 1992, the director of Foreign Intelligence at the Department of Energy, Jay Stewart, hosted a secret conference of military and intelligence professionals at Fort McNair in south east Washington to discuss the nuclear implications of a possible breakup of the Russian Federation. He called it "Russian Fission". Everything discussed at the conference was highly classified. As detailed in *One Point Safe*, the classified report on the conference, together with all supporting documents and videotapes, was destroyed on the direct orders of a political appointee in the incoming Clinton administration. A subsequent secret congressional investigation established that the original initiative for this suppression came from the office of Strobe Talbot, Clinton chum, Deputy Secretary of State and a man who believes anything told him by any Russian who speaks good English, carries a laptop and laces the conversation with the word "reform". For his temerity in raising the issue in the first place, Stewart was driven from the government, his career ruined.

So anxious indeed is the administration to keep the public image of the current regime in Moscow presentable that they will on occasion promote falsehoods that Yeltsin himself would blush to utter. Toward the end of the Chechen war, Grigori Yavlinsky, a decent enough Russian opposition politician, visited the State Department and raised the issue of the war with James Collins, a key official on US policy toward Russia. In view of the fact, asked Yavlinsky, that according to official Russian government figures the casualty toll had passed 100,000 (mostly civilians), could not the US government moderate its support for Yeltsin?

"You're wrong", said Collins. "The casualty figure is only 30,000."

This understanding attitude is of course mirrored in organs such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. Columns of newsprint detail the promise and appeal of "reformers" such as First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais, who recently arranged the sale of a company that controls a third of the entire world's nickel reserves to a crony for $70 million, or photogenic Boris Nemtsov, who calls Margaret Thatcher "granny" and was recently heard on a leaked phone tap arranging to hold up a decree enforcing disclosure of officials' income so that he could get some ill-gotten gains stashed away. *Washington Post* Moscow correspondent David Hoffman even ran a piece recently announcing that Chubais and Nemtsov were "taking on" the banking oligarchy, a notion that evoked hearty laughter in Moscow.

The reality of life in Russia today, with the gangster capitalists and their political consorts fighting over the spoils (Chubais tends the fortunes of the billionaire banker Vladimir Potanin) is far too raw for the Hoffmans of this world. It might take a suitcase to open their eyes. ■

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